

event; it does not seem to have evolved with ease elsewhere. Presumably that event of high improbability marked the transition of inanimate to animate forms. What it was we are unlikely ever to know. Although one could then argue that trying to deduce a probable sequence will inevitable fail that will not stop guesses. Cairns-Smith is right. The origin of life is a thriller in which the last few pages (and the solution) have been removed. How can anyone not be intrigued by the variety of solu-

tions offered? But the value of these little books is really to what we as biologists study all the time. An emphasis on surface phenomena, catalytic diversity vs catalytic efficiency surely does great service in making known ideas which bear directly on our understanding of the process of present day life itself. In that way each can be read and enjoyed for its own sake.

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Cellular Regulation and Malignant Growth

Lipmann Symposium

Edited by S. Ebashi

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503 pages. DM 140.00

This volume contains 52 papers on a very broad range of topics under the following subheadings: gene organization, regulation of cellular activities, growth and development and cell transformation. While the validity of the title may be debatable, the subtitle is all-important. The volume is a report of a meeting held near Mount Fuji, Japan, in May 1984 which was attended by 60 alumni of Lipmann to celebrate his 85th birthday. I had the pleasure of celebrating in Japan the 60th birthday of Kunio Yagi so I can just imagine the meticulous care and graciousness that would have accompanied the occasion of an 85th celebration. At many points in the symposium his hosts expressed the hope that they would see the 90th birthday of their honoured guest but this was not to be for Fritz Lipmann died on 24th July 1986.

I never had the privilege of working in Lipmann's laboratory although I called on him there several times and was much honoured when he accepted my invitation to write for '*Essays in Biochemistry*'. I can well appreciate the remarks of Kurahashi on page 183 when he says of Lipmann that "He is always alert, listens intently and pa-

tiently even to the views of fledgeling biochemists, gives the most pertinent advice based on his immense and multifarious learning and profound knowledge. . .". In this regard I remember asking Lipmann whether he had seen a paper in *Nature* which for me at least reported a rather unexpected finding. Lipmann replied that yes he thought he had seen it but was trying to forget it. This was, of course, followed by a little chuckle which was so characteristic of his lectures even though the audience often could not share the joke because it was only muttered to Lipmann himself.

It is not really possible to review a volume such as this, only to admire the breadth of talent of the alumni and to note the wide spread of the countries from which they came. I detect many distinguished names such as Baddiley, Chapeville, Davie, Elliott, Hadjiolov, Haenni, Kaplan, Kaziro, Kleinkauf, Lucas-Lenard, Nishizuka, Stadtman to name just a few. The volume is edited by the distinguished Japanese biochemist Setsuro Ebashi. Surely a volume to treasure especially for anyone who knew Fritz Lipmann.

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